

Members

Rep. Robert Bischoff, Chairperson
Rep. Terry Goodin
Rep. Phyllis Pond
Rep. William Ruppel
Sen. James Merritt, Vice-Chairperson
Sen. David Ford
Sen. Allie Craycraft
Sen. James Lewis



INDIANA STATE FAIR ADVISORY COMMITTEE

LSA Staff:

Susan Montgomery, Attorney for the Committee
Bernadette Bartlett, Fiscal Analyst for the
Committee

Authority: IC 15-1-1.5-4

Legislative Services Agency
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MEETING MINUTES¹

Meeting Date: August 8, 2001
Meeting Time: 11:00 A.M.
Meeting Place: Indiana State Fairgrounds, 1202 E.
38th Street, Board Room,
Administration Building
Meeting City: Indianapolis, Indiana
Meeting Number: 1

Members Present: Rep. Robert Bischoff, Chairperson; Rep. Phyllis Pond; Rep. William Ruppel; Sen. David Ford; Sen. Allie Craycraft; Sen. James Lewis.

Members Absent: Rep. Terry Goodin; Sen. James Merritt, Vice-Chairperson.

Representative Bischoff, Chairperson of the Committee, called the meeting to order at 11:04 a.m. He asked each of the members to introduce themselves, and to name the district that they represent. Susan Montgomery, attorney for the Committee, read the statutory directive to the Committee as follows, contained in IC 15-1-1.5-8:

"The committee shall do the following:

- (1) Serve as liaison between the commission, the board of trustees of the fair, the board, and the general assembly.
- (2) Review policies affecting the activities of the commission, the fair, the state fair, the facilities at the fairgrounds, and the property owned by the commission.

¹ Exhibits and other materials referenced in these minutes can be inspected and copied in the Legislative Information Center in Room 230 of the State House in Indianapolis, Indiana. Requests for copies may be mailed to the Legislative Information Center, Legislative Services Agency, 200 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2789. A fee of \$0.15 per page and mailing costs will be charged for copies. These minutes are also available on the Internet at the General Assembly homepage. The URL address of the General Assembly homepage is <http://www.ai.org/legislative/>. No fee is charged for viewing, downloading, or printing minutes from the Internet.

- (3) Provide long range guidance for the commission, the board of trustees of the barn, and the board.
- (4) Review annually the commission's, the board of trustees of the barn's, and the board's budgets and other accounts and report financial conditions to the legislative council. Further advise the budget committee regarding appropriations and other financial matters concerning the commission, the board of trustees of the barn, and the board.
- (5) Propose, review, and make recommendations concerning legislation affecting the commission, the barn, and the board."

Representative Bischoff asked members of the public and staff in attendance to introduce themselves. Attendees included members of the Indiana State Fair Commission and Indiana State Fair Board.

Representative Bischoff asked for a few remarks from William Stinson, Executive Director of the Indiana State Fair. Mr. Stinson stated that he had heard a positive reaction from the media regarding improvements made to the Fair. Although the first day of the Fair today was hot, the weather forecast was for much cooler weather over the weekend, a fact that Mr. Stinson considered positive. Good weather over a weekend increases profitability and accessibility to the Fair. Further improvements to the cattle barn will be started after this fair is over and should be finished for the 2002 Fair. That project is one of those considered in the Fairgrounds 2000 report of earlier years. Mr. Stinson hoped that the Fair would continue to set attendance records as in 1998, 1999, and 2000.

Dr. Gene Sease, Chairman of the Indiana State Fair Commission, thanked the members of the Committee for the Legislature's support. He stated that the Commission realizes that funds are limited, and that he hopes that the Commission is a good steward of the monies that are made available to it. Representative Bischoff thanked the Commission for its hard work, and stated that the Fair belongs to all the citizens of the state. Bob McDowell, President of the Indiana State Fair Board, also gave a few words of greeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Representative Pond stated that she felt that the Committee should be more pro-active than in the past. She believes that the Committee should stick up for farmers and the agricultural industries, and is concerned that reassessment of property will impact upon farmers. With fewer and fewer farmers in the state, she feels that the General Assembly should look deeper into issues affecting farmers.

NEW BUSINESS

Representative Ruppel stated that a few years ago the legislature gave the Indiana State Fair Commission the authority to bond for improvements. He sat in on a Fairgrounds 2000 meeting recently, and noted that bonding may be needed in the near future. It would appear that this may be the time to do it, as interest rates are favorable. While the \$0.15 distribution to the Fair from each riverboat admission is helpful, it is not enough, nor can it be counted on for total funding.

John Goss, representing the Lieutenant Governor's office, believes that the proposal for bonding will be nearing completion in a few months. The cattle barn and the east horse barn are part of a proposal for a project that will cost about \$7 million dollars and will take four years. It is thought that some monies will come from the riverboat revenues. Representative Pond urged caution in this assumption and wanted to know more later on regarding the project. She fears that riverboat revenues could go down and she did not

want the General Assembly to be responsible for paying off bonds if that turns out to be the case. Representative Bicschhoff stated that a meeting would be held in October to discuss bonding issues.

Betsy Kranz, Executive Director of the Center for Agricultural Science and Heritage (the Barn), spoke on behalf of the Barn's Board Of Trustees. She thanked the Committee and legislature for the support given to it, and expressed concern that the fewer farmers there are, the less that the public knows about this industry. She furnished the Committee with the Program Master Plan for the Center for Agricultural Science and Heritage (Exhibit A) and the Barn Yarn (Exhibit B). Over 4,000 people have visited the Normandy Barn in the last year, and she was happy that a generous financial gift is coming from a major agricultural company. The Barn has a new position of educational specialist, and it is able to open its doors to the public for private events and receptions. The Barn had a reception last night for its current featured art exhibit, showing the work of Douglas David, whose art will be on the next Indiana license plate. She invited the Committee to the Normandy festival, to be held on Saturday, October 6, 2001.

NEXT MEETING DATE

After discussion, the Committee set the next meeting date for Wednesday, September 5, 2001, with the time yet to be determined by the Chairperson.

There being no more business before the Committee, Chairperson Bischoff adjourned the meeting at 11:42 a.m.